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Walt Whitman the Exponent of American Democracy

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WALT WHITMAN THE EXPONENT OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

BY

ESTHER MARGARET COLVIN

A. B. Albion College, 1914.

THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

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I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

Esther M. Colvin

ENTITLED Walt Whitman The Exponent of American Democracy

BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF Master of Arts.

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Committee
on
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THE DEMOCRATIC IDEAL.

What is this Democracy that we fight for or that we fight against? Is it a political form or a social ideal; static or dynamic? Is it a beautiful air castle faultily built out of dreams and crumbling already under the force of reactionary waves and winds? Or is it, perhaps, the changing plan of a structure whose foundations have just been laid; an evolving ideal retreating as we advance - keeping always beyond our immediate comprehension?

Democracy, after all, depends very largely for its definition upon the character of the individual who estimates it. To one it means self-government, or the right of the masses of society to rule themselves through elected representatives - a government "of the people, by the people, for the people." To another it signifies a social order in which all men are brothers bound together by a love that kills self-interest and creates a new and universal tie of common understanding and usefulness. To one it is a fixed political policy; to another it is an energizing educating force. To the one who looked upon America as the supreme and final test of its power, who expected to see a great socialistic heaven rise out of our composite civilization, Democracy is distinctly a failure. For him the time has come when we must recognize our mistake, see in our legisla-

tive injustices that men are neither free nor equal, feel in our executive weaknesses that mob rule is the only alternative from despotism, and hear in our social chaos the note of essential and ultimate discord. For him the dream is over, the newly discovered continent has proved to be but a forgotten corner of the old, and orderly retreat from an uncomfortable position is the best that he can hope. But to the idealist, Democracy is not a fact but an evolution, not a creation of the mind but a growth of the spirit, inevitable as the planets and as expanding as our knowledge of them. For him no proof is needed; his understanding is intuition; his surety, genius.

Through all the long ages men have dreamed dreams and seen visions of a land of promise in which no one should be master, but all should share alike, rich and poor, strong and weak. Surely there must have been some magic in those catchwords "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" that they could kindle into revolutionary frenzy the down-trodden, king-ridden people of France. But the French people have waited long, and will wait longer for the fulfillment of those prophetic words. Bound together by the strongest ties of patriotism and national pride, France has struggled through revolution and through conquest to attain social justice, and to purchase the right to stamp upon all races her own national individuality. Of course she has failed; complete success was outside the range of possibility unless one could believe that the time had come for a heaven - a French heaven - upon earth.

To Wordsworth, Mill, Carlyle, and the other English thinkers who built their early hopes upon the revolutionary party in France, this failure was momentous. It knocked the very foundations from under their political faith and forced them to build anew. But whether their final creeds arose as did Mill's from a strong confidence in the power of legislation to overcome every evil, or like Carlyle's from the brave faith in a hero's power to lead the ignorant; whether they welcomed the growing democratic tendencies or feared them; nineteenth century Englishmen seemed agreed that Democracy was becoming inevitable. Great political and social reforms have come to England; but they have not broken down class distinctions - changed them perhaps, but not eliminated them, for the resistance of tradition and of custom has been too strong. The English race has been a great world power, but English Democracy has not become World Democracy.

Since the beginning of the Prussian supremacy, the German states have been striving mightily for political unity, until at last it seems that they have found it as Bismarck prophesied in a "Great Cause." Whether or not they succeed in imposing upon the rest of Europe the German ideal is a question which we must leave for the coming months to settle.

In this conflict of nations, America holds a place that is surely unique. Composite as the world itself, bound by naught but the will of its people, holding within itself the sum of all possibilities, of necessity just what we make it, the United States holds the key to unity as no

other country could. So it is that a poet of this land can bring a message that is larger than patriotism, and touch a cord that is deeper than self-love. So it is that Walt Whitman, American, is yet a world-poet and world-democrat, prophet of the larger comradeship toward the fulfillment of which another Prophet has commanded:-

"Let not a man glory in this, that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind."

II

A Biographical Sketch.

Walt Whitman was not of literary stock; in fact he was the one one of marked ability in a rather long line of common-place folk. The Whitmans were English people, numbered among the earliest settlers in eastern Long Island. Like their neighbors in this isolated community, they were quiet, stalwart, independent farmers, strong in endurance, but lacking in imagination. In the words of Dr. Bucke they were: "[1]solid, tall, strong-framed, long-lived, moderate of speech, friendly, fond of their land and of horses and cattle, sluggish in their passions but fearful when once started."

Whitman's mother was of a rather different and superior type. She was Louisa VanVelsor, the daughter of Major Cornelius Van Velsor, a Dutch farmer of Cold Spring Harbor, not far from Huntington the home of the Whitmans. Devoted passionately to this mother, the poet must have felt strongly the kindred spirituality of her nature, and been deeply thrilled by the quick intuitive sympathy she always manifested for her incomprehensible son.

Walt, the second of nine children, was born in the little village of West Hills, Huntington township,

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1. Quoted from G. R. Carpenter. Walt Whitman. New York, 1909. p. 7.

Suffolk County, Long Island, on the thirty-first of May, 1819. When he was only four years old, the family moved to Brooklyn- not to Brooklyn as we know it today, but to a village of only seven thousand inhabitants; unpaved, unlighted, yet filled with kindly, unpretentious small-town people. The poet's childhood, however, was not to be passed in an atmosphere even as metropolitan as this; it was to the country and the sea, instead, that he was sent for his education. There were long and happy months at the homes of his grandmothers, when the varied sights and sounds of the farm beat in upon his consciousness; when the phoebe bird, the lilacs, and the marsh grasses became a part of him. The sea too flooded his soul; the great mysterious sea which was later to become the type of his own art, the "prevading gauge and tally." But now it had no such articulate meaning; it was only a powerful but half-understood voice crying its vaguely marvelous message to the heart of the child:

> "For more than once dimly down to the beach gliding,
> Silent, avoiding the moonbeams, blending myself
> with the shadows,
> Recalling now the obscure shapes, the echoes, the
> sounds and sights after their sorts,
> The white arms out in the breakers tirelessly tossing,
> I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair,
> Listen'd long and long."

As a boy, Whitman seemed to show no unusual promise. He was a quiet lad, but active and very fond of sports. The ocean drew him to the beach where sea-gulls' eggs awaited the small-boys' ravages, and the soft summer meadows lured him back into the heart of the island. Sensitively absorbing all these multitudes of impressions, he

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1. Sea Drift. pp. 8 and 9. (See page 12).

gave expression to none, for his was not the type of genius which produces a Thanatopsis. Rather, the sights and sounds and feelings became a part of his inner being, his soul-life; for many years were to pass before Nature would stir into expression his dormant poetic consciousness. Sensitive he must have been in the extreme, yet it was a healthy, happy sort of sensitiveness, bred in the broad open spaces, with the salt marsh under foot and the blue sky over head.

Whitman's public school career ended abruptly when at the age of twelve he joined the ranks of the laborers, as a lawyer's office boy. Here he had his first introduction to the circulating library, and became the devoted admirer of the Arabian Nights, and of the poems and novels of Sir Walter Scott. Becoming bored with the law, the boy transferred himself to a doctor's office where he made a similarly brief stay. In 1833, he was apprenticed to the printer of the Long Island Patriot; in 1834 he was a compositor for the Long Island Star; and then until 1837 he was employed by various newspapers of New York. A year of country-school teaching followed, and then in 1838 he established in Huntington a paper of his own which he called the Long Islander. The enterprise seemed promising enough, but the restless spirit of the young man drove him back to school teaching again. Debating and lecturing began to make their appeal, and he became, like Whittier, a strong abolitionist and prohibitionist.

During the next few years, which were spent mainly in the newspaper work, Whitman wrote for several of the

leading periodicals, including the Democratic Review, the American Review, and the Broadway Journal. His temperance novel, Franklin Evans appeared in 1842.

Resigning the editorship of the Daily Eagle in 1847, he took a position on the staff of the New Orleans Picayune, and departed with his brother Jeff for the South. But the Picayune could not hold him; and he was soon back again in Brooklyn, voicing his political opinions through a paper of his own, the Daily Freeman.

As an editor, Walt was considered to be almost impossibly lazy; the call of the fields and the sea was more imperative far than that of the press. The habit of solitude was still strong upon him; and so it came about that he read the Bible, Homer, Ossian, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Dante, Shakespeare, the old Hindoo poems, and the German Nibelungen, while the surf pounded on the rocks and the salt spray beat in his face. But to his passion for solitude he had now added another-that for society. The "human concourse" had an irresistible attraction for him; the drama became vitally interesting; and great oratorios stirred his imagination.

In 1850, Whitman yielded again to the promptings of his restless spirit, gave up his newspaper work, and joined his father in the carpentering trade. The life was simple and uneventful, days of leisurely labor with an hour at noon for reading and thinking; evenings of roaming through the streets of the city, following his instinct for comradeship. After five years of this life he published the Leaves of Grass, July 1855. Here in the unique and individual

method which has never yet been successfully imitated, Whitman voiced his two fundamental principles of life; individuality, and unity; the exaltation of the self, and universal comradeship. These ideas seemed, however, to be bound up so inseparably in his mind with the glorification of sex that the poet experienced considerable difficulty in connection with the printing of this volume. Public opinion was strong against it, and the publishers were forced to let it go out of print. The 1860 edition was made by Thayer and Eldridge of Boston, and included many later poems.

When the Civil War broke out in 1861, Whitman did not enlist as a soldier; but he was drawn to Washington a year later by the news that his brother George had been wounded. It was through this incident that Walt began his long period of nursing. As a hospital visitor he was unique: "My custom,"he says, "[1]is to go through a ward or a collection of wards, endeavoring to give some trifle to each, without missing any. Even a sweet biscuit, a sheet of paper or a passing word of friendliness, or but a look or nod if no more." And again, in a letter to his mother: "[2]I believe I weigh about 200, and as to my face, (so scarlet) and my beard and neck, they are terrible to behold. I fancy the reason I am able to do some good in the hospitals among the poor languishing and wounded boys, is that I am so large and well -

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1. Traubel. With Walt Whitman in Camden. p. 36.

2. Quoted by G. R. Carpenter. Walt Whitman. New York 1909. p. 93.

indeed like a great wild buffalo, with much hair."

The constant sight of suffering, however, told upon even this suberb physique, and in 1864 Walt was forced to return to Brooklyn. Here he published his second volume of poems, the Drum Taps. in 1865, Whitman secured an appointment in the Indian Bureau of the Department of the Interior, but was almost immediately dismissed because of his notorious Leaves of Grass. Powerful friends secured his transfer to another department; and had it not been for O'Connor's fiery defense of the "Good Gray Poet," little importance would have been attached to the change.

Democratic Vistas, the first of his mature prose work was published in 1871. In this essay, Whitman recognized the dangers of superficial democratic intellectuality and the need of a new order that is not political merely, but social and religious as well. Like Carlyle he felt strongly and passionately the need for change in a spiritual rather than a material sense, but like the philosophic materialists he put his faith in the great middle class of workers.

During the years of his Washington clerkship, Walt had become to a large extent a public character. Striking in appearance, his wonderful physique set off by his coarse shirt open at the neck, and his broad-brimmed hat, he was a figure to attract attention. John Burroughs tells of an interesting and characteristic incident: "[1]I give here a glimpse of him in Washington on a Navy Yard horse car one

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1. Quoted by G. R. Carpenter. Walt Whitman. New York 1909. p. 113.

summer day at sundown. The car is crowded and suffocatingly hot, with many passengers on the rear platform, and among them a bearded, florid-faced man, elderly, but agile, resting against the dash, by the side of the young conductor, and evidently his intimate friend.....Among the jam inside near the door, a young Englishwoman, of the working class, with two children, has had trouble all the way with the youngest, a strong, fat, fretful, bright babe of fourteen or fifteen months, who bids fair to worry the mother completely out, besides becoming a howling nuisance to everybody. As the car tugs around Capitol Hill the young one is more demoniac than ever, and the flushed and perspiring mother is just ready to burst into tears with weariness and vexation. The car stops at the top of the Hill to let off most of the rear platform passengers, and the white-hatted man reaches inside and gently but firmly disengages the babe from its stifling place in the mother's arms, takes it in his own and out in the air. The astonished and excited child, partly in fear, partly in satisfaction at the change, stops its screaming, and as the man adjusts it more securely to his breast, plants its chubby hands against him, and pushing off as far as it can, gives a good long look squarely in his face - then as if satisfied snuggles down with its head on his neck, and in less than a minute is sound and peacefully asleep without another whimper, utterly fagged out."

In January of 1873, Whitman suffered a slight paralytic shock, but was able three months later to hasten

to the death-bed of his mother. Grief and fatigue brought on a heavier attack, and he was forced to give up the clerkship. Here his active life was suddenly modified, and disease and poverty came to keep him company. For nineteen years he was to linger, for the most part in physical misery, and often, too, in a mental "blur." He lived mainly in Camden, New Jersey, with months now and then at Glendale and Philadelphia. When his strength permitted, there were longer excursions to the Rocky Mountains, to Canada, and to the South. In 1884, the poet purchased a small but comfortable home in Mickle Street, Camden, secured a housekeeper, and settled down quietly to gather up the loose ends of his artistic product. November Boughs, Goodbye My Fancy!, Old Age Echoes, and A Thought of Columbus were written during this last period.

In spite of his physical wretchedness, the remaining years held some enjoyment for Whitman. The stigma of public disfavor was being slowly withdrawn, and Camden was becoming to some extent the goal of literary pilgrimages. Admirers were kind, both at home and abroad; many were ready to call him master, and still more - friend. But at last even his splendid vitality was exhausted, and he died on March 26, 1892.

Thousands gathered to do him honor, rich and poor, educated and ignorant, strong and weak; a multitude the very existence of which was the greatest tribute they could bring to this prophet of Democracy.

Unless otherwise indicated quotations from Whitman will be found in Camden edition. New York 1902.

III

Whitman and Politics.

Walt Whitman was an idealist, even a mystic - not actively a politician. He stated plainly[1] that the poet must be a champion of political liberty, yet he could not ally himself permanently with any political party. True to his principle of universal tolerance, he found good in all things and had a wholesome fear of the too ardent reformer. "[2]Be radical", he said to a Camden visitor, "be radical - be not too damned radical!" And again: "[3]Don't let your dislike of conventions lead you to do the old things an injustice: lots of the old stuff is as new as it is old." "There is no doubt more than most of us see in the stagnant pool."

As a young man, Whitman was a democrat; then later he became a member of the Free Trade, Free Soil, Free Speech party which merged into the Republican. But he was opposed by nature to all partisanship, whatever its name, form, or purpose; he was too broad to be deeply interested in the outcome

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1. Bliss Perry. Walt Whitman. Boston 1906. p. 74.
2. Traubel. With Walt Whitman in Camden. New York 1908. p.223.
3. Ibid. pp. 223-4.

of any local agitation, or to be vitally concerned in the victory of any faction. In 1888 Walt said to a caller: "[1]I hardly seem in line with the Republican party any more - in fact it is hardly in line with itself. What next?- something better will turn up. I never had entire faith - now I have hardly any faith at all."

It was characteristic of him to be indifferent to the outward signs of that spiritual development which entirely engrossed him. "[2]Ain't we all Socialists?" he asked of a visitor. But when questioned as to their political program he replied: "Of that I'm not so sure - I rather rebel. I am with them in the result - that's about all I can say." [3]He was "somehow afraid of agitators" although he "believed in agitation."

Perhaps his most sweeping statement was the following: "[4] The whole gang is getting beyond me. I find it harder and harder every year to reconcile myself to the exhibit they make: they narrow, narrow, narrow every year; after awhile I'll be altogether without a political home unless I build one for myself."

During the early years of his journalistic career, Whitman had undoubtedly been much interested in contemporary politics. His mother bore witness to the writing of "barrels

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1. Traubel. With Walt Whitman in Camden. p. 341.
2. Ibid. 221-2.
3. Ibid. 166
4. Ibid 359.

of lectures," largely political;"and in 1842 he published a temperance sermon thinly disguised as a novel. He even sent a memorial to the Common Council and Mayor of Brooklyn in behalf of a freer municipal government and against Sunday restrictions. But when he had once found himself in Leaves of Grass and had entered upon his poetic life, he seemed to feel almost no vital interest in the political side of his democracy.

It may be that this change was deliberate. Perhaps in his conscious role as the "uncompromising oracle of democracy," he felt the wisdom of making his message a general one only. At any rate he was fond of telling that phrenologists believed his chief characteristic to be caution. But it is far more probable that with the glimpse of a broader horizon, he felt his standard of values altering, and saw the essential triviality of party affiliations in comparison with his ideal of world democracy. Thus his attitude of laissez-faire seems to be the result of deep insight and tempermental patience rather than of ignorance.

In regard to some matters of political interest he expressed himself clearly. "[1]I am for free trade," he said "-absolute free trade: for the federation of the world." And again: "[2]I am satisfied that for America Free Trade and open admission of all foreigners is an integral part of its theory; the future of the world is one of open communication

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1. Traubel. With Walt Whitman in Camden. p.

2. Edward Carpenter. Days with Walt Whitman. p. 40.

and solidarity of all races, and if that problem cannot be solved in America it cannot be solved anywhere."

Of other subjects of apparently as great importance in the scheme of democracy, however, Whitman had little or nothing to say. When questioned about his silence during the slavery agitation, he replied[1] that the abolitionists were making quite noise enough, and that there were other things just as important that had to be attended to. "[2]The negro," he said, "will get his due from the negro - from no one else; that is the whole story, beginning, middle,and end." Again, using labor reforms as an example he said that it was no good trying to benefit people who did not feel the need of any change. "[3]I am an evolutionist, not in the first place a revolutionnaire."

Except for brief petulant flashes like that in which he exclaimed: "[4]The whole business done at once instead of a little patch of it here and there! I don't want the brotherhood of the world to be so long a-coming," Whitman showed a vast patience and willingness to wait. "[5]Society," he said, "like a person in middle life is set, and you have

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1. Edward Carpenter. Days with Walt Whitman. p. 22.
2. Traubel. With Walt Whitman in Camden. p. 148.
3. Ibid. p. 193.
4. Ibid p. 255.
5. Edward Carpenter. Days with Walt Whitman. p. 39.

to make the best of it. I am, I hope a bit of a reformer myself. But we must grow generous ungrasping masters of industry; absurd as the idea would seem to most now-a-days, I believe that is the upshot of what is going on. The creation of a large, independent, democratic class of small owners is the main thing - though it is never once mentioned by our economists and politicians." "[1]I trust Humanity. The race is not free but will be when we get a real Democracy."....
"[2]We are heaping up money here in a few hands at a great rate - but our men?.....We can lose all our money and start again - but if we lose our men! But I have no fears."..... "[3]I must insist upon the masses - they are our best, they are preservative. I insist upon their integrity as a whole - not, of course denying or excusing what is bad!.....It is the good not the bad that is common."

Whitman's democracy, like his poetry, is that "not of the achieved but of the achieving," of the American who is being made but is not made. His ideal citizen is the one who is out on the open road of progress; his perfect state a democracy of ever-widening portals and ever-deepening fraternity.

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1. Traubel. With Walt Whitman in Camden. p. 157.
2. Ibid. 174-5.
3. Ibid. 175.

IV

Whitman's Personality.

Upon those who had the privilege of knowing him personally, Whitman seems to have exerted the strong magnetic force of his unusual personality. Edmund Gosse testifies thus to the disarming strength of the man.[1]

"A melancholy woman opened the door; it was too late now to go away. But before I could speak, a large figure, hobbling down the stairs, called out in a cheery voice, 'Is that my friend?' Suddenly by I know not what magnetic charm, all wire-drawn literary reservations faded out of being, and one's only sensation was of gratified satisfaction at being the 'friend' of this very nice old gentleman.....The opening impression was as the closing one would be, of extreme simplicity.....In his suit of hodden gray and shirt thrown wide open at the throat, his gray hair and whiter beard voluminously flowing, seemed positively blanched with cleanliness; the whole man sand-white with spotlessness, like a deal table that has grown old under the scrubbing-brush."

Edward Carpenter deals at greater length with the personality of the poet. In the opening chapter of Days with Walt Whitman he gives his first impressions gleaned

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1. Edmund Gosse. Critical Kit-Kats, New York, 1903. pp.101-2.

in 1877:[1]

"Meanwhile in that first ten minutes I was becoming conscious of an impression which subsequently grew even more marked - the impression, namely, of an immense vista or background in his personality. If I had thought before (and I do not know that I had) that Whitman was eccentric, unbalanced, violent, my first interview certainly produced quite a contrary effect. No one could be more considerate, I may almost say courteous; no one could have more simplicity of manner and freedom from egoistic wrigglings, and I never met anyone who gave me more the impression of knowing what he was doing than he did. Yet away and beyond all this I was aware of a certain radiant power in him, a large benign effluence and inclusiveness, as of the sun, which filled out the place where he was - yet with something of reserve and sadness in it too and a sense of remoteness and inaccessibility.....I remember how I was most struck in his face by the high arch of the eyebrows, giving a touch of childlike wonder and contemplation to his expression; yet his eyes, though full of a kind of wistful tenderness, were essentially not contemplative but perceptive - active rather than receptive - lying far back, steady, clear, with small definite pupils and heavy lids of passion and experience. A face of majestic simple proportion, like a Greek temple as someone has said; the nose Greek in outline, straight (but not at all thin or narrow, rather the contrary), broad between the brows, and meeting the

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1. Edward Carpenter. Days with Walt Whitman. London, 1906. pp. 5-7.

line of the forehead without any great change of direction; the forehead high, with horizontal furrows, but not excessively high; the head domed, and rising to a great height in the middle, above the ears - not projecting behind; ears large and finely formed; mouth full, but almost quite concealed by hair. A head altogether impressing one by its height, and by a certain untamed 'wild hawk' look, not uncommon among the Americans."

In 1884, Carpenter was more definitely impressed by the contradictory elements which appear throughout the poet's life and writings. He records:[1]

"I am impressed more than ever before with W's contradictory, self-willed, tenacious, obstinate character, strong and even extreme moods, united with infinite tenderness, wistful love, and studied tolerance; also great caution (he says: the phrenologists always say that caution is my chief characteristic - did you know that?) and a certain artfulness combined with keen, penetrating and determined candour, the wild-hawk look still there, 'untamable, untranslatable', yet with that wonderful tenderness at bottom."

Here the observer is struck by the presence of the warring elements, but seems a little at a loss to account for them; he does not quite see that Whitman explains the message, and that the message explains Whitman,-either is incomplete without the other. We are familiar with the

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1. Edward Carpenter. Days with Walt Whitman. London, 1906. p. 58.

two great opposing principles of the Self and Society which pervade all his writings, so it should not surprise us to find in his life and character these same conflicting ideals. In personality as in literature he is an egoist, but a lover of all human beings; brooding, yet eager to merge his life into that of every brother and sister; impenetrably reserved, yet revealing himself as perhaps no man has been revealed before; individualist, yes, but comrade.

The love for solitude seems to have been more pronounced during his youth than in later years. Basil De Selincourt[1] says that in childhood Walt must have been a heavy absorptive creature who might have been liable to the penalties of extreme sensitiveness but for the fact that his suceptibility was as wide as it was keen. As a journalist he indulged his craving for solitary meditation and reading by going off to the country or seashore for weeks at a time. Always he seems to have had a peculiar power of withdrawing in spirit from the society of those rare persons who were so thoroughly "impossible" as to bore him. In illustration of this quality, Carpenter[2] tells of an absurdly loquacious, celebrity-hunting old lady who was determined to inflict her conversation upon the defenseless poet." Walt listened in an amused manner, and for about ten minutes was quite decently courteous and

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1. Basil De Selincourt. Walt Whitman. New York 1914. p. 16.

2. Edward Carpenter. Days with Walt Whitman. London, 1906. p. 28.

patient. Then I suddenly perceived that his face was becoming 'precipitous;' the little woman of course was addressing him, no one else being of any importance; but he seemed to be becoming deaf, there was no speculation in his eyes; it was rather awful; for a minute or two she tried vainly to effect a lodgement for her words, to get any kind of handhold on the sheer surface, and then gathering up her tackle, she made the best of a bad job, bade a hasty good-bye and disappeared." It is true, too, that Whitman was always famous for his Quaker obstinacy and his "magnificent No" - his ability to refuse a request or invitation absolutely, without thanks and without excuse, yet kindly in spite of it all.

It is not as an individualist, however, but as a socialist that Whitman reaches the zenith of his power. All classes of society were familiar to him - all were brothers. In his Biography, Dr. Bucke speaks of the wide range of his acquaintance:[1]

"He knew the hospitals, poor-houses, prisons, and their inmates. He passed freely in and about those parts of the city which are inhabited by the worst characters; he knew all their people, and many of them knew him; he learned to tolerate their squalor, vice, and ignorance; he saw the good (often much more than the self-righteous think) and the bad that was in them, and what there was to excuse and justify their lives. It is said that these

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1. Quoted by George Rice Carpenter. Walt Whitman. New York, 1909. p. 23.

people, even the worst of them, while entire strangers to Walt Whitman, quite invariably received him without discourtesy and treated him well. Perhaps only those who have known the man personally and have felt the peculiar magnetism of his presence, can fully understand this. Many of the worst of those characters became singularly attached to him. He knew and was sociable with the man that sold peanuts at the corner, and the old woman that dispensed coffee in the market. He did not patronize them, they were to him as good as the rest, as good as he, only temporarily dimmed and obscured.

"True, he knew, and intimately knew, the better off, and educated people as well as the poorest and most ignorant. Merchants, lawyers, doctors, scholars, and writers were among his friends. But the people he knew best and liked most were neither the rich and conventional, nor the worst and poorest, but the decent-born middle-life farmers, mechanics, carpenters, pilots, drivers, masons, printers, deckhands, teamsters, drovers, and the like. These and their wives and children, their old fathers and mothers, he knew as no one, I think, ever knew them before, and between him and them (especially the old folks, the mothers and fathers) in numberless instances existed the warmest attachments."

Broadway drew him with "that indescribable human roar and magnetism" of its endless crowd. Where men were, there he wanted to be, he wanted to feel the presence of the throng that he loved; he craved the electric force of

the vital humanity around him. The street-corners, the theatres, the opera, and especially the stage-coaches were vantage points from which he gained invaluable knowledge of life.

Perhaps his spirit of comradeship reached its culmination of service during the Civil War, when Walt gave his time,and sacrificed his health for the stricken soldiers. John Swinton described one of his hospital visits:

"Never shall I forget one night when I accompanied him on his rounds through a hospital, filled with those wounded young Americans whose heroism he has sung in deathless numbers. There were three rows of cots, and each cot bore its man. When he appeared in passing along, there was a smile of affection and welcome on every face, however wan, and his presence seemed to light up the place as it might be lit by the presence of the Son of Love. From cot to cot they called him, often in tremulous tones or in whispers; they embraced him, they touched him, they gazed at him. To one he gave a few words of cheer, for another he wrote a letter home, to others he gave an orange, a few comfits, a cigar, a pipe of tobacco, a sheet of paper or a postage stamp, all of which and many other things were in his capacious haversack. From another he would receive a dying message for mother, wife, or sweetheart; for another he would promise to go on an errand; to another some special friend, very low, he would give a manly farewell kiss. He did the things for them which no nurse or doctor could do, and he seemed to leave a benediction at every

cot as he passed along. The lights had gleamed for hours in the hospital that night before he left it, and as he took his way towards the door, you could hear the voice of many a stricken hero calling, 'Walt, Walt, Walt, come again! come again!'"

Whitman formed very strong attachments to several young men of his acquaintance - attachments which extended and deepened over long periods of years. Typical among these was his friendship for Peter Doyle, a young street-car conductor in Washington. Doyle tells the story of their first meeting:-[1]

"The night was very stormy,- he had been over to see Burroughs before he came down to take the car - the storm was awful. Walt had his blanket - it was thrown around his shoulders - he seemed like an old sea-captain. He was the only passenger, it was a lonely night, so I thought I would go in and talk with him. Something in me made me do it and something in him drew me that way. He used to say there was something in me had the same effect on him. Anyway I went into the car. We were familiar at once - I put my hand on his knee - we understood. He did not get out at the end of the trip - in fact went all the way back with me. I think the year of this was 1866. From that time on we were the biggest sort of friends..... Walt rode with me often - often at noon, always at night. He rode round with me on the last trip, sometimes rode for

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1. Quoted by George Rice Carpenter. Walt Whitman. New York, 1909. p. 23.

several trips. Everybody knew him. He had a way of taking the measure of the drivers' hands - had calfskin gloves made for them every winter in Georgetown - these gloves were his personal presents to the men."

Not afraid to give himself unrestrainedly to others, Whitman reaped the love he had sown. Few men, it is certain, have drawn to themselves in the bonds of personal friendship their hundreds and thousands of comrades, as did Walt Whitman.

V.

American Democrat.

"[1]Come said my soul,
Such verses for my body let us write, (for we are one),
That should I after death invisibly return,
Or, long, long hence in other spheres,
There to some group of mates the chants resuming,
(Tallying earth's soil, trees, winds, tumultuous waves,)
Ever with pleased smile I may keep on,
Ever and ever yet the verses owning - as, first, I
here and now,
Signing for soul and body, set to them my name,
Walt Whitman."

To attempt to place Whitman definitely and finally is like trying to catalogue the sea. In the eyes of one observer, the ocean is a body of water separating two continents, and recalls to the mind negotiations with a steamship company; for another it represents unlimited power, vast space, and unguessed, adventurous possibilities; to still another it is a revelation of the splendor of God, of Nature, of the "Universal Urge." So, in a large measure, Whitman evades definition. The man of gross material mind and unreasoning sensualism takes to himself and, misunderstanding,

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1. Autographed inscription to Leaves of Grass. 1876.

loves one phase of the poet; the romanticist sees him in his elemental, primitive, daring egoism, and calls him brother; the dreamer, the mystic, is drawn by his prophetic qualities, his intuitive, seer-like knowledge. So far does the critic find in Walt Whitman what he brings to him that Mr. Richard Watson Gilder even went so far as to say: "[1] I am a stickler for form in literature, and one thing that I admire in Whitman is his magnificent form." It is only the boundless universality of the man which makes this possible; the vast range and chaos of mind and matter labeled by Gosse[2] as literature in a state of protoplasm.

If Whitman were one thing only; or, indeed if he were three or four things only, the task of the critic would not seem so hopeless. If like Tennyson, he had chosen a small field of literary endeavor and then succeeded in making himself absolute master of that field, he would have gained full recognition and the confidence of the literary people of his own time. But the exquisite artistry of Tennyson was utterly foreign to the temperament of Whitman, and seemed to him a thing to be avoided rather than cultivated. His ideal of what a poet should be was far different.

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1. Quoted by Bliss Perry. Walt Whitman. Boston 1906. p. 288. from Camden's Compliments to Walt Whitman, Philadephia 1889.

2. Edmund Gosse. Critical Kit-Kats. New York 1903. p. 97.

He is the Answerer,

What can be answer'd he answers, and what cannot be answer'd he shows how it cannot be answer'd.

Then the mechanics take him for a mechanic,
And the soldiers suppose him to be a soldier, and the sailors that he has followed the sea,
And the authors take him for an author, and the artists for an artist,
And the laborers perceive he could labor with them and love them,
No matter what the work is, that he is the one to follow it or has follow'd it,
No matter what the nation, that he might find his brothers and sisters there.

The singers are welcom'd, understood, appear often enough, but rare has been the day, likewise the spot, of the birth of the maker of poems, the Answerer;
(Not every century nor every five centuries has contain'd such a day, for all its names.)

All this time and at all times wait the words of true poems,
The words of true poems do not merely please,
The true poets are not followers of beauty but the august

1. Whitman. Song of the Answerer. Selections. pp. 201-205.

masters of beauty."

Surely, it is not strange that we have difficulty in estimating a man who owns such a conception of poetry not only as an ideal but as a working basis. If he did achieve that for which he sought, it is much too soon for us to realize the fact; and if he failed, then, too, we are not prepared to judge. He is a prophet of the American future, and of the synthesis of east and west, north and south. Future generations must be witnesses of the fulfillment of his prophecy.

We must not assume, however, that because Whitman rejected as foreign to his art the craftmanship of his contemporaries and of those who would have been his natural models, that he had no literary style of his own, or that he wrote with absolutely no regard to form. More and more critics are coming to see that his oft quoted statement "No one gets at my verses who insists upon viewing them as a literary performance" has been over-emphasized; and that he has a very real, if highly original method from which he rarely departs. He rejects set patterns of verse not because he is incapable of mastering them, but because he finds that a finished rhyme scheme is too constrained to permit the faithful portrayal of an unfinished universe. The life of which he offers us samples is not a thing which can be poured into a mould or fitted to any pattern.[1]

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1. For a discussion of the constructive principles of Whitman's form see Basil Selincourt. Walt Whitman. Chapter III.

Whitman is often spoken of as representing the Greek spirit in modern art because he tries to interpret the life of his age and of his country largely through the human body. He insists upon this synthesis of the body with the soul, the one no less than the other. If he refuses to address himself to the brain alone, to reason coolly and formally; it is for a reason. He feels that art, to be true to itself must be felt no less than understood. Literature that does not arouse feeling as well as intellect is worse than useless. He arouses the whole personality and touches the whole range of intellectual and emotional experience.

"[1]Of physiology from top to toe I sing,
Not physiognomy alone nor brain alone is worthy for the Muse----------
Of Life immense in passion, pulse, and power,
Cheerful, for freest action form'd under the laws divine,
The Modern Man I sing."

Someone has said that Whitman had a philosophy of his own - that of "evolutionary vitalism." I am inclined to think, however, that he would deny the possession of so fixed a thing as a philosophy. Why should his philosophical ideas require organization when practically all life is in a Nebulous state? Horace Traubel tells[2] of a Camden visitor who accused Walt of refusing to give a consistent philosophy.

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1. One's-Self I Sing. p. 1.

2. Horace Traubel. With Walt Whitman in Camden. p. 156.

He says: "I (Traubel) put in, 'Plenty of philosophy but not a philosophy. To which W. answered: 'That's better - that's more the idea.'" In his poems too, he leaves philosophies for nature:

"[1]Now I re-examine philosophies and religions
They may prove well in lecture rooms, yet not
prove at all under the spacious clouds and
along the landscape and flowing currents."

Whitman brings morality back to essentials and identifies the inner with the outer law. The highest law is, in his eyes, the law of liberty, but not the liberty of license. Rather, it must be the fusion of the conscious will of the individual with the universal uncouscious wills which have always existed in history and will always exist. Morality must be not the constraint of custom and law, but the normal activity of the healthy and sane human being.

"[2]I give nothing as duties,
What others give as duties I give as living impulses,
(Shall I give the heart's action as a duty?)"

Religion stands, in Whitman's work, as the prevading principle which is to unite individualism with comradeship, and make democracy possible. It is not, however, the form of religion, but rather the spirit in which he puts his trust. He felt the church to be a sham and an absolutely useless institution which the world might very reasonably be more prosperous without. He shared Carlyle's distrust of the "old clothes" of worship, but characteristically

1. Song of the Open Road. p. 183.
2. Myself and Mine. p. 290.

refrained from Carlyle's heated denouncement of them. His attitude was nearer that of Emerson, a passive rather than an active one.

Whitman had a deep primitive religious instinct which assured him of the existence of God in the universe. His conception was the pantheistic one of God in every object. Everything is glorious, divine. For him the glory of the terrestial and the celestial are one.

"[1] Lover, divine and perfect Comrade,
Waiting content, invisible yet, but certain,
Be thou my God.

Thou, thou the Ideal Man,
Fair, able, beautiful, content, and loving,
Complete in body and dilate in spirit,
Be thou my God.

O Death, (for Life has served its turn,)
Open and usher to the heavenly mansion,
Be thou my God.

Aught, aught of mightiest, best I see, conceive, or know,
(To break the stagnant tie - thee, thee to free,
(O Soul)
Be thou my God.

All great ideas, the races' aspirations
All heroisms, deeds of rapt enthusiasts,
Be ye my Gods.

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1. Gods. page 30.

Or Time and Space,
Or shape of Earth divine and wondrous,
Or some fair shape I viewing worship,
Or lustrous orb of sun or star by night,
Be ye my Gods."

His religion culminates as a democratic religion must, in the idea of immortality, for only in immortality can the perfect equality which is at the root of democracy be realized. Browning, whose similarity to Whitman Professor Triggs[1] has pointed out, justifies his belief in immortality through a process of reasoning; but Whitman feels no such need, his knowledge is as intuitive as it is sure.

"[2]Joy, shipmate, joy!
(Pleas'd to my soul at death I cry.)
Our life is closed, our life begins,
The long, long anchorage we leave,
The ship is clear at last, she leaps!
She swiftly courses from the shore,
Joy, shipmate, joy!"

At the root and in the veins of all that we know as the work of Whitman we find the one essential, pervading ideal - democracy. It is both the cause and the result of his life and of his art. And the democratic ideal is for him a two-fold one, uniting the warring elements of individualism in a perfect synthesis.

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1. Oscar Triggs. Browning and Whitman. London 1892.
2. Joy, Shipmate, Joy! page 285.

The first principle of Whitman's doctrine, the glorification of the Self, is a new expression of the old ideal of personal liberty which found radical exphasis in the revolutionary doctrine of Rousseau. The individual is given place in the world as the supreme fact of existence:

"[1]I have said that the soul is not more than the body,
And I have said that the body is not more than the soul,
And nothing, not God, is greater to one than one's self is."

Yet Whitman's individualism does not end, like that of Rousseau in the self. Personal development must always be the means to the end, the half only of the "perfect round." He strikes the balance when he says:

"[2]I speak the pass-word primeval, I give the sign of Democracy,
By God, I will accept nothing which all cannot have their counterpart of on the same terms."

It is through this synthesis that Whitman gains the right to be an authoritative exponent of democracy. Emerson and Thoreau were theoretical democrats but never carried their ideas into practical completion as did Whitman. Emerson approached his democracy from the mystical spiritual side and could never have brought himself actually to live the

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1. Song of Myself. p. 105.
2. Ibid., p. 62.

life. Whitman's criticism of his austere, philosophic friend had some basis in fact: "[1]I love Emerson - I do not need to say that - but he was somewhat thin on the physiological side." This criticism could never have been passed upon Whitman. More than anything else he was a man among men. Absolute equality was for him no mere phrase to be tossed about in literary and philosophic bandinage. It was a principle of life, one of the main springs of his own existence. The meanest, most wretched were brothers and sisters as good as he only "temporarily dimmed and obscured."

Very few except the greatest prophets have even glimpsed the ideal of fraternity in the broadness of its scope; still fewer have ever dared to live it. In poetry Whitman identified himself with all humanity, and in life he was brother and lover of all.

"[2]Be composed - be at ease with me - I am Walt Whitman
liberal and lusty as nature,
Not till the sun excludes you do I exclude you,
Not till the waters refuse to glisten for you and the leaves to rustle for you, do my words refuse to glisten and rustle for you."

The democracy of the past has always been a national democracy - could be nothing else. The barriers have always been high between peoples of different races and between those wo spoke different languages. Nationalism

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1. Horace Traubel. With Walt Whitman in Camden. p. 461.
2. To a Common Prostitute. p. 161.

in the sense of absolute exclusiveness was indispensable for the development of the nations. Within the narrow confines of state and nation, however, democracy has had its myriads of champions. To assert the rights of the common people has always appealed to minds of the highest type and souls of the broadest vision. Such in large measure has been the democracy of Europe. Rousseau champions the "under-dog" and demands equality for all. Wordsworth in a calmer and more gently persuasive manner makes his claim for the humble and the poor. But even Burns, the most representative poet of the British democratic sentiment merits to some degree the indirect criticism of Theodore Parker, who heralds the democracy which has for its slogan not that I am as good as you are, but that you are as good as I am. In short, the ideal toward which the Old World has worked has been the one which would gain for the so-called "lower classes" equal rights and equal opportunities with their more fortunate brothers and sisters. A noble ideal it has been surely, and worthy of the highest effort toward fulfillment. In a world where national lines are so sharply and definitely drawn, where prejudice has been drilled into the fibre of the people by so many hundred years of strife and war, only a mystic with the most profound intuition could have glimpsed a higher democratic principle which would be able to bring unity. And mystics are not common in the west.

In the New World, however, these limits are largely a thing of the past. Within the borders of America are natives of every land, representatives of every race; not as guests or

as foreigners, but as co-citizens of a mighty world - country. Never before has there been such a fusion of ideas, such an interchange of the widely differing national standards. Surely from this land of equal opportunity, the world has a right to expect something new in democracy - something which will unite the past and present, east and west.

"[1]Sail, sail thy best, ship of Democracy,
Of value is thy freight, 'tis not the Present only,
The Past is also stored in thee,
Thou holdest not the venture of thyself alone, not of the Western Continent alone,
Earth's resumé entire floats on thy keel O ship, is steadied by thy spars,
With thee Time voyages in trust, the antecedent nations sink or swim with thee,
With all their ancient struggles, martyrs, heroes, epics, wars, thou bear's the other continents,
Theirs, theirs as much as thine the destination - port triumphant;
Steer them with good strong hand and wary eye,
O helmsman, thou carriest great companions,
Venerable priestly Asia sails this day with thee,
And royal feudal Europe sails with thee."

Democracy has, indeed, been of great importance in America as Dr. Triggs [2] indicates when he points out that the

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1. Thou Mother with thy Equal Brood. page 237.
2. Oscar Triggs. Browning and Whitman. page 34.

two great wars in our history have been fought for the two fundamental principles - liberty and union. As in our life so in our literature, the democratic ideal has found frequent expression.

Emerson speaks with the strong, pure, and noble Puritan voice for independence and sturdy self-reliance, but his message is still in a large measure that of his literary ancestors. He is native to some extent, and wishes to be more native, but in the great bulk of his work he is a democrat "not of a new world, but of a new England." The Puritans surely had a message to give to civilization, but this poet of Puritanism only or even of Puritanism in the main cannot deny that he is sectional.

The range of Lowell is somewhat broader. His is christian democracy interpreted for the American people. Like Lincoln he is a great exponent of the principle of union in these United States. He sees that all Americans are the sons of God and hence all are brothers. "Lowell with his spiritual vision is the national seer."[1] When he shows the English[2] that democracy is not a new disease and that it as truly pervades all their life as it does ours, he takes his ideal outside his own country, but in no new way. He merely insists that England recognize her own national democracy as we acknowledge our Union. He shows that the democratic ideal is one which springs up spontaneously in each nation and finds independent expression in each country; but he does not see

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1. Oscar Triggs. Browning and Whitman. page 38.

2. Essay on Democracy.

that it necessarily brings together the different nations. There is nothing international in the conception.

Surely America has something new to contribute.

"[1]And thou, America
For the scheme's culmination, its thought and reality
For these (not for thyself) thou has arrived."

It is only an American who has broken all connections with the literary standards and traditional conceptions of his predecessors who can see with undimmed eyes of the spirit the meaning of America and its place in world-democracy. Whitman is the one poet of our land to whom, as yet, such a vision has been possible.

The great secret of his power lies in the fact that he is a world-poet; and the secret of this universality lies in the fact that he is genuinely American. He is the poet not of New England, nor of the West; not of the union of the North and South; not of the leveling of rich and poor. He is, rather, the poet of all of America, every state, every city, every person; hence of the world, for he sees America as the composite of all. As the individual is emphasized in all his work to gain the brotherhood of man, so America is consistently sung to gain the world.

His Americanism does not for a moment reject the contribution of the old world:-

"[2]And yet thou living present brain, heir of the dead, the Old World brain,

1. Song of the Universal. page 278.
2. Thou Mother with thy Equal Brood. page 237.

Thou that lay folded like an unborn babe within its
folds so long,
Thou carefully prepared by it so long - haply thou but
unfoldest it, only maturest it,
It to eventuate in thee - the essence of the by-gone
time contain'd in thee,
Its poems, churches, arts, unwitting to themselves,
destined with reference to thee;
Thou but the apples, long, long, long a-growing,
The fruit of all the Old ripening today in thee."

Yet he adds to it the primitive ardor and urge of the new start in the new country. He sees, hears, and feels everything with the keen sharp appreciation of the pioneer, and comes to the tired old world like a breath from our limitless prairies:

"[1]I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,
Those of mechanics each one singing his as it should
be blithe and strong,
The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank
or beam,
The mason singing his as he makes ready for work or
leaves off work,
The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat,
the deckhand singing on the steamboat deck,
The shoemaker singing as he sits on the bench, the
hatter singing as he stands,
The wood-cutter's song, the ploughboy's on his way in

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1. I hear America Singing. p. 13.

the morning or at noon intermission or at sun-
down,
The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young
wife at work or of the girl sewing or washing,
Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none
else,
The day what belongs to the day - at night the party
of young fellows, robust, friendly,
Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs."

No other poet has ever included in his artistic material quite all these varied elements as has Whitman. And no other poet, probably, has ever so completely effected their synthesis. All races, nations, and creeds are one, united through the great ruling principle of democratic love - the love of Christ, of Buddha, of Mohammed,- all great prophets, all religions are one to him.

"Come I will make the continent indissoluble;
I will make the most splendid race the sun
ever yet shone upon;
I will make divine magnetic lands,
With the love of comrades,
With the life-long love of comrades.
I will plant companionship thick as trees all along the
rivers of America, and along the shores of the
great lakes and all over the prairies;
I will make inseparable cities, with their arms about
each others' necks;

by the love of comrades
by the manly love of comrades.
For you these from me, O Democracy, to serve you,
ma femme!
For you, for you I am trilling these songs."

Whitman's plea to America must merit some respone, for surely no other land is adapted as is this home of all nations and races, to produce citizens of the world and brothers of man.

In speaking of this principle of universality Edward Carpenter[1] makes it clear that Whitman is unique in the western world as a purely democratic teacher. Others have had democratic ideas or tendencies, but no others have realized its fundamental importance and emphasized it consistently from first to last.

"Teachers like the Buddha, Jesus of Nazareth, St. Francis, and the Syrian Bab, belong to no race or nationality; if they press the claims of religion or morality, it is with so little insistence on any particular scheme or code that their net may be said to be spread to catch all humanity. They are accepters rather than deniers;.....yet - though it would not be acceptable or desirable to make comparisons of greatness - we may say that even among these Whitman was (with the exception perhaps of the Bab) unique in the realization of the world-wide and universal character of his message."

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1. Edward Carpenter. Days with Walt Whitman. pages 80-82.

Mr Carpenter adds some very interesting comparisons of Whitman with the Oriental teachers, showing that much of the vision which America gave to its poet was shared long ago by the mystics of the east, and revealed in the Bhagavad-Ghita, the Upannishads, and other religious books.

But whatever the east may have done or be doing, it is certain that in the west Whitman gives to the world in the name of America a new vision of a new earth.

"[1]So, soul, seest thou not God's purpose from the first?
The earth to be spann'd, connected by network,
The races, neighbors, to marry and be given in marriage,
The oceans to be crossed, the distant be brought near,
The lands to be welded together."

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1. Passage to India. Section 2.

APPENDIX.

Interested by Mr. Carpenter's estimate which puts Whitman and the Bab side by side as universalists, I have tried to see how far the comparison may be carried.

The Bab appeared in 1844 as the forerunner of a new manifestation of God which was to unite all races and all religions. Baba'o'llah, the great teacher whom he foretold assumed his mission in 1863, and lived through persecution and exile until 1892, the year of Whitman's death.

Abdul Baha, the son of Baha'o'llah then took up the task of interpreting and explaining the prophet's words. In 1911 and 1912 Abdul Baha made a tour of the west, speaking in the prominent churches and before the philosophical societies of France, Germany, England, and America.

Very fitting it is that the conception of universality should appear simultaneously in the east and west; a prophecy that now, indeed, we are ready for union of ideals.

I will place side by side passages which illustrate the similarity of the teachings.

God in Every Object.

"I hear and behold God in every object, yet understanding God not in the least.

In the faces of men and women I see God, and in my own face in the glass;

I find letters from God dropped in the streets, and everyone signed by God's name."

[1]"the traveler beholds the beauty of the Friend in everything. In fire he sees the face of the Beloved, in unreality perceives the sign of the Reality - To His Beauty there are no veils but Light, and His face has no covering save manifestation - The True One hath become manifest, like unto the shining sun. Pity that He hath come in the city of the blind!"

Equality of Individuals.

"Painters have painted their swarming groups, and the center figure of all;

From the head of the centre figure spreading a nimbus of gold-color'd light;

But I paint myriads of heads, but paint no head without its nimbus of gold-color'd light;

From my hand, from the brain of every man and woman it streams effulgently, flowing forever."

[2]"All men are of one family, the crown of humanity rests on the head of each man. In the eyes of the Creator all are equal."

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1. Baba'o'llah. Seven Valleys. Chicago. 1914. p. 60.
2. Abdul Baha. Universal Principles. Washington. 1912. p. 35.

Equality of Men and Women.

"I am the poet of the woman the
same as the man,
And I say it is as great to be
a woman as to be a man,
And I say there is nothing greater
than the mother of men."

[1]"Men and women have equal rights upon earth in religion and society --- As long as women are prevented from attaining their highest possibilities, so long will men be unable to achieve the greatness which might be theirs."

The Development of the Self.

"Whoever you are! motion and reflection are especially for you.
The divine ship sails the sea for you.
Whoever you are! you are he or she for whom the earth is solid and liquid,
You are he or she for whom the sun or moon hang in the sky,
For none more than you are the present and past,
For none more than you is immortality.
Each man to himself, and each woman to herself, such is the word of the past and present, and the word of immortality;

[2]"Thou were in the deserts of non-living, and, by means of the earth of command, I made thee to appear in the world of possession. I charged all the atoms of dependence and the realities of creation with thy training - - - I appointed eyes to guard thee, set thy love in all hearts, and with pure generosity I reared thee under the shadow of My Mercy, and protected thee with the essence of My Grace. The purpose

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1. Abdul Baha. Rays from the Sun of Truth. Washington. 1915. p. 9.
2. Baha'o'llah. Hidden Words. Chicago 1914. p. 34.

No one can acquire for another -
not one!
No one can grow for another -
not one!"

of all this was to enable thee to arrive to Our Eternal Might and to deserve Our Invisible Favors."

Universality.

"My spirit has passed in compassion and determination around the whole earth,
I have looked for equals and lovers, and found them ready for me in all lands;
I think some divine rapport has equalized me with them."

[1]"O people of the world, ye are all the fruit of one tree and the leaves of one branch. Walk with perfect charity, concord, affection and agreement. I declare by the Sun of Truth, the light of agreement shall brighten and illumine all the horizons."

[2]"Beware of prejudice; light is good in whatever lamp it is burning! A rose is beautiful in whatsoever garden it may bloom! A star has the same radiance if it shines from the East or from the West."

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1. Baha'o'llah. Universal Principles. Washington 1912. p. 15.
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